

# CONTROLLER



**MERCED  
IRRIGATION  
DISTRICT**





## THE AREA

“The Gateway to Yosemite”, Merced County, formed in 1855, is located in the heart of the San Joaquin Valley and is the world’s most productive agricultural area. The County spans from the coastal ranges to the foothills of Yosemite National Park. Merced County has an ethnically diverse population of approximately 270,000. The District Headquarters is located in the City of Merced, the County seat, which offers an excellent school system, including a community college (Merced College) and the University of California’s newest campus, U. C. Merced. The City offers its residents wide, tree-lined streets, affordable housing, and a strong sense of community in a small-town atmosphere. Residents enjoy a warm summer with temperatures averaging 95 degrees and tepid winters with temperatures averaging 55 degrees.

Merced, centrally located between Fresno and Modesto, is just a short two-hour drive to the San Francisco Bay Area, Monterey and Carmel, as well as Yosemite National Park in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. For those who may wish to travel a bit further and enjoy a variety of both winter and summer recreational activities, Lake Tahoe is approximately a four-hour drive away. However, one need not venture far from Merced to find exciting recreational activities. Lake McClure and Lake McSwain (both owned and operated by the District) and the Merced River offer boating, camping, fishing, water skiing, windsurfing, wildlife viewing, sailing, and much more.

A wide variety of favorably priced suburban and rural housing opportunities are plentiful in Merced County. The current median price for a home in Merced County is approximately \$115,000.

## THE DISTRICT

The Merced Irrigation District traces its roots back to the mid 1800’s and was formed to provide water to farmers. In 1917, a 15-member committee was formed by the Merced County Farm Bureau to explore the possibility of an irrigation district and on November 25, 1919, a vote was taken and the

decision made that an irrigation district was in fact needed. Approximately ninety years ago Eastern Merced County residents who aspired to bring a more stable economy to the area formed the Merced Irrigation District.

Today, Merced Irrigation District owns, operates and maintains the New Exchequer and McSwain dams, reservoirs, and hydroelectric facilities. These are Merced Irrigation District’s primary water storage facilities on the Merced River. They are located in the foothills on the western slope of the Sierra Nevada mountain range, approximately 23 miles northeast of Merced. The two dams and reservoirs are integral parts of the 1964 Merced River Development Project, and are licensed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). New Exchequer Reservoir (Lake McClure) has a storage capacity of 1,024,600 acre feet, while McSwain Reservoir (Lake McSwain) has a storage capacity of 9,730 acre feet. The New Exchequer Dam Project was completed in 1967 as a multi-purpose facility providing facilities and water for all beneficial uses, including domestic and irrigation water, flood control, hydroelectric power generation, recreation, and the environment.

The District is a public agency organized under the laws of California and is the leading provider of clean and affordable irrigation water for its 2,200 growers. The District also generates wholesale electric power at Lake McClure’s New Exchequer Dam/Powerhouse and is a major supplier of retail electric service to commercial, industrial, and residential users in Eastern Merced County. The District is the 25th largest public utility in California. The District’s 115-kilovolt transmission system serves parts of Livingston, Atwater, Winton, Merced and the entire Castle Airport Aviation and Development Center. Since 1996, Merced Irrigation District has connected over 7,500 customers to Merced Irrigation District’s electric system with an estimated 9,000 new residential units contracted for future service.







## MID MISSION STATEMENT

- Preserving and protecting District water rights
- Encouraging stable employment and advancement opportunities for the development of the District work force
- Promoting a reasonable balance among competing water demands, including those of agriculture, the environment, recreation, and municipal and industrial uses
- Promoting efficient water use through sound conservation practices
- Protecting water quality
- Developing additional water supplies as needed to meet reasonable water demands
- Following responsible financial practices
- Fostering a public service attitude among all District employees
- Supporting careful management of floodwaters and stormwaters to protect life, property, and water quality
- Encouraging community involvement in District affairs

Merced Irrigation District owns, operates and maintains five recreation areas adjacent to the lakes behind New Exchequer and McSwain Dams. The Lake McSwain Recreation Area is located adjacent to Lake McSwain. McClure Point, Barrett Cove, Horseshoe Bend and Bagby Recreation Areas are all located adjacent to Lake McClure. Recreational activities enjoyed in the recreation areas include fishing, boating, swimming, camping, hiking, and bicycling.

Merced Irrigation District is governed by a five-member Board of Directors who are elected by Division to four-year terms. Hicham ElTal, the District's Deputy General Manager, currently serves as the Acting General Manager/Head of Staff and oversees District operations.

## THE POSITION

Reporting to the District's Chief Financial Officer, the Controller is responsible for managing and directing the accounting, billing, financial reporting, and commercial activities of the District. Areas of responsibility include payroll, accounts payable, and accounts receivable (includes billing, customer service, and statutory reporting). The Controller serves as an advisor to District employees on accounting and budget policies, participates as a member of the District's management team in establishing and implementing short- and long-range goals and objectives, monitors departmental budgets, and directs/prepares monthly and annual financial reports.

Finance Department resources include a budget of \$1.2 million with 8 employees. A proposed reorganization will bring the customer service function under the supervision of the Controller (budget of \$800,000). The Merced Irrigation District budget is \$73 million.

The Controller is an exempt position serving as part of the District's management and confidential group.

## THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

Ideal candidates will be well rounded public finance professionals with particular strengths in governmental accounting and who ideally possess a working knowledge of utility-based accounting. Successful candidates will possess a strong familiarity with computerized accounting, spreadsheet and database applications, including the ability to coordinate continuing system improvements with staff and consultants. Candidates who have a history of supervising the work of multiple employees while successfully managing multiple functions and priorities will be favorably considered. Strong communication skills, both verbal and written are paramount, as the Controller presents to the Board of Directors and other groups on occasion, and is responsible for preparing clear, concise, accurate and complete reports including statistics. Ideal candidates will possess a strong customer service ethic with the ability to establish and maintain positive and cooperative working relationships across all levels of the organization. Strong management skills are paramount – successful candidates will possess the demonstrated ability to both empower employees while holding them accountable.





## APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

To be considered for this excellent career opportunity, please submit your resume with cover letter, current salary and four work-related references by **Monday, January 11, 2010**. Your resume should reflect the months and years of current and prior positions and also the size of budget and staff you manage. Submit materials to:



Stuart Satow  
CPS Executive Search  
241 Lathrop Way  
Sacramento, CA 95815

Tel: 916 263-1401

Fax: 916 561-7205

Email: [resumes@cps.ca.gov](mailto:resumes@cps.ca.gov)

Web site: [www.cps.ca.gov/search](http://www.cps.ca.gov/search)

### Qualifications

**Experience:** Five to ten years of increasingly responsible experience in accounting and fiscal management, including at least three years at the supervisory level. Relevant experience in a public utility setting/electric utility is preferred, AND:

**Education:** A Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in accounting, finance or closely related field is required; MBA/MPA or CPA desirable.

Following the filing deadline, candidates with the most relevant qualifications will be forwarded to the District for consideration. Those individuals determined to be best suited for the position will be interviewed by the District in February with an appointment anticipated by early March upon the completion of reference checks, background checks, and medical examination.

## COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

The annual salary range for the Controller's position is **\$86,028 - \$104,568**. The starting salary will be dependent on the qualifications of the successful candidate. The District's benefits plan includes:

### Retirement

- PERS retirement 2% @ 60 formula
- District currently pays all of the employee contribution (7%)

### Health and Welfare Program

- District paid health, dental and vision insurance for employee (employee and District share cost for dependent or family coverage)

### Insurance

- District paid term life insurance

### Deferred Compensation

- Voluntary tax deferred plans available with District contribution of \$20 per month for each \$100 per month employee contribution (District contribution capped at \$150 per month)

### Leave

- 12 paid days of sick leave per year
- 11 holidays per year
- Paid vacation depending on length of service (starting at 10 days after one year of service)
- 40 hours per year of Administrative Leave



Visit the District's website at  
[www.mercedid.org](http://www.mercedid.org)

*Merced Irrigation District is an equal opportunity employer*